

ADDRESS BY
J. STROM THURMOND
GOVERNOR OF SOUTH CAROLINA
and
STATES' RIGHTS DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
at
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MY FELLOW AMERICANS:

In the course of my visit to the great State of Arkansas, and my talks with your people, I have learned to have a new respect for the independence of thought and for the determination of the Arkansas people to stand by their convictions in matters of public interest.

There is evident in Arkansas a growing interest in political affairs, and I believe that is a healthful and wholesome sign. I believe it is part of the great development program through which the people of this state are going to achieve a balance of agriculture and industry that will mean greater happiness and prosperity for all her people.

I am fully convinced that the people of Arkansas are capable of achieving economic well-being and greater prosperity. They can do so under the American system of government and the American way of life, which will bring to ultimate development all the inner capabilities of the individual man.

But, far more important, I believe the people of Arkansas are capable of managing the internal affairs of their state, as the United States Constitution provides. I think they are intelligent enough, and efficient enough, to take advantage of the Constitutional provision which reserves to them the right to govern themselves wisely and well.

In this belief, I have no doubt that I am joined by the vast majority of your people. I do not think any loyal resident of this state would stand up and deny that the citizens of Arkansas are capable of conducting themselves so that everyone within her boundaries may have all of the privileges of full citizenship in our democracy. So far as I know, there has been no one in public life in this state who said that the Arkansas people must have outside assistance in meeting the problems that are peculiar to her own people.

But there have been others, outside your state, who have dared to insult your people by proposing that you give up your right to handle your own affairs. There have been others who have stated that the people of Arkansas are lax in their performance of their duties, and that you must yield your self-government to an "all-wide and all-powerful" Federal Bureaucracy.

President Truman, through his demand for the enactment of the so-called Civil Rights laws, has implied that Arkansas is not capable of assuring her people of justice and fair treatment.

Governor Dewey, through his Republican platform promise to enact Civil Rights legislation, has said that it is time the people of Arkansas were made to get in line with a Federal pattern.

Henry Wallace, through his gysterical platform of government control over everything, has said that you are no longer intelligent enough to solve the problems which concern you and you alone.

As for me, I know and love the people of Arkansas, and I am familiar with their traditions and their history.

I do not believe the people of this great state must be forced to give up their right of local self-government, and submit to long-range meddling by remote Federal control!

As an American, as a good Democrat, and as the Governor of a sovereign state, I have tried to work for the happiness and prosperity of the people of my state by sponsoring every possible movement toward that end. But I have been, and I am, just old-fashioned enough to hold fast to the American principle of government by, and with, the Constitution of the United States.

I do not believe it reasonable, or desirable, or necessary to violate that Constitution to gain any social aims, no matter how high-minded their proponents make them sound.

Our experience with Hitler has taught us that governmental power has frequently been seized and centralized by the use of false slogans that pretend to sponsor human rights. The emotional background of human rights programs is often used to make people forget their fundamental rights of government in a democracy.

You and I today are witnesses of an attempt to centralize power in Washington, under the pretext of creating human rights by legislative fiat. We have seen a program put forward which would flagrantly violate the Constitution on the pretense that some of our people are being denied their civil rights. And we have seen that program endorsed by three candidates for President -- Truman, Dewey, and Wallace -- in an effort to outbid each other for the votes of a minority racial bloc in the big-city states.

No good American will deny that our way of government is designed to provide equal rights for all our citizens. We work toward that end, under the inspiration of the faith of our founding fathers, who made it possible for us to escape tyranny and oppression.

But all intelligent Americans know that equal rights in our democracy are

possible only because of the principle of local self-government laid down by the United States Constitution. They know that if this principle is destroyed, all human rights and all equal rights will be destroyed with it. They know that the minority groups will suffer along with everybody else.

The American people, therefore, were appalled and dumbfounded by the fact that after the Philadelphia conventions three major candidates for the Presidency had offered to violate the Constitution to purchase the votes of a minority bloc. The people began to wonder who was really running their country. They began to ask themselves where they were heading.

They could not reasonably endorse the effort of President Truman to keep his machine in power, since he had made it plain that he wanted the authority to control state affairs in an unconstitutional manner.

They could not logically support Governor Dewey, who had built a powerful machine in his own state by using minority votes, and who now proposed to extend that machine over the nation by the same method, at the expense of the Constitution.

They could not give their votes to Henry Wallace, who believed that the central government should have power over the daily lives of all the people, regardless of the Constitution.

After Philadelphia, it appeared that a vote this year would be a vote in favor of departing from the American system of local self-government. It seemed that Americans must, by default, permit their cherished principles to be disregarded without protest.

Truman, Dewey, and Wallace, having pushed their unconstitutional bids for minority votes into their platforms, rubbed their hands in glee. It was, they decided, going to be merely a question of which one could out-bid the other.

But they forgot that the same system which has perpetuated our democracy, has also preserved a certain independence of thought and action among the American people. They forgot that Americans are not sheep, to be led to the slaughter. They forgot that the great pride of the American people is the efficiency and the desirability of our kind of democracy, as opposed to the central-government theories of the European tyrants.

They took it for granted that the people of Arkansas and the other states of the nation would automatically endorse the most drastic assault on Constitutional government ever proposed in this country.

My fellow Americans, they were wrong -- dead wrong.

The people found a way of expressing their determination that the principle of local self-government shall be preserved. They found a medium through which they

can stop the effort to take away the rights of the states to manage their own affairs.

By joining the States Rights Democrats, they are going to make it plain to Truman, Dewey, and Wallace that they cannot boost themselves to power by stepping on the United States Constitution!

The principles of local self-government are not mere theories. They are closely concerned with the person freedoms of the individual American in his everyday life. They are the only protection the individual has against an invasion of his liberties. And yet the Civil Rights platform of Truman, Dewey, and Wallace would undermine that principle and destroy those liberties.

Your right to establish voting qualifications in your own state, and to regulate elections, is endangered by the Anti-Poll Tax Bill, which would violate the Constitutional privilege by which a state controls its own elections.

Your right to control your own sheriffs and police officers, and your right to control and regulate your state courts, are invaded by the Anti-Lynching Bill. This bill would set a precedent for the Congress to pass national laws against any crime that is now entirely controlled within the states.

The Anti-Segregation proposals are an assault upon your right to establish your own social customs and laws, and to come and go within your community as you please. They would endanger your law-enforcement methods and contribute to lawlessness within your communities. If such a right is given to the federal government to control our social laws, the precedent would enable it to reach down and order us around in our daily lives without regard to our personal desires.

The so-called FEPC is an assault upon the right of a business man to employ those he deems suitable to his business. It takes away the right of a working man to associate with persons of his choice, on the job and in labor unions. It would assault your right to a trial by jury, since your violations of this law would be passed upon by a Commission, and reviewed on appeal by a court, without a jury trial.

Finally, the enforcement of these laws would be carried out by a national police force, already being trained by Truman. This means you would be hounded by federal police whom you never saw before, and who neither know nor care what your problems are.

That is what you would gain if you gave up the right of your state to manage its own internal affairs. You would lose the only way in the world you have of preventing a fascist or a communist dictator from taking over your affairs.

I cannot believe that the American people are willing to exchange the Constitutional rights of their states for the kind of government that keeps Joseph Stalin in power!

A vote for Mr. Truman, Mr. Dewey, or Mr. Wallace is a vote for the FEPC -- a piece of legislation which is the first plank in the Communist platform. All three have endorsed a bill which is in fact based on a law written by Stalin.

Under the proposed FEPC, the commission would have the authority to write its own rules and regulations, just as the New York commission set up by Dewey has. We won't know what the national rules will be until the commission is named. But we've had enough experience with this kind of commission to know where the danger lies.

Let us see what these rules might be by listing some of those set up by Dewey.

In New York it is unlawful to ask an applicant for a job what his former name was if he had changed it. You can't ask him for a birth certificate, or whether he is native-born, or to show his naturalization papers. You can't ask him whether he is an atheist or not. You can't ask him what his complexion is, or to send a photograph if he applies by mail. You can't ask him what kind of a family he come from.

But, worst of all, you can't even ask him what his military experience is, or to say where he was in World War I. Thus you might be employing an alien who shot down your own son overseas, and not even know it.

Is it any wonder the Communists want this law passed? Is it any wonder they have become so bold in our government?

Yes, the Communists have joined the minority machine leaders to promise their help in this election in exchange for the promise of an FEPC. They won the first round, when they got the support of Truman, Dewey, and Wallace.

But the States Rights Democrats are giving the American people a chance to say that they will not endorse this law to help any man get elected!

There is no way around it -- a vote for Truman, Dewey, or Wallace is an indication that you want an FEPC, and an Anti-Poll Tax Bill, and an Anti-Lynching Bill, and Anti-Segregation.

It is time for good Americans to stand up and be counted. There is no middle ground. Either you are willing to sell your birthrights for the sake of blind party loyalty, or you are going to use your privilege of the ballot to cast out the influences which have taken over that party.

It is time for those who believe in representative democracy to rise up and say so. It is time for good American to call a halt to the trend toward the total state in this country.

We may take no comfort from the fact that our Southern Senators have made a gallant fight against these proposals. They have fought bravely for many years, alone and subject to abuse and humiliation. But each time these force bills are brought up, they come nearer to passage. They cannot be blocked much longer, if we

do not give our Senators the support of our ballots. All these bills have now been lumped together and promised by both major parties. They will pass if we do not speak.

My friends, I have always been a staunch advocate of the two-party system. I still believe in it, to the limit. But I say to you that the two-party system means nothing at all when the two parties both commit themselves to violating the Constitution.

Let me say, too, that I have always been a good Democrat, and I am still a good Democrat. But I am not, and I never will be, the kind of Democrat who will forget all the great principles of the Democratic Party because of pressure from a selfish minority group. I am not the kind of Democrat the Hagues, the Kelleys, the McGraths, the Primms, and the Pendergasts want me to be.

There are millions of good Democrats in this country who place loyalty to the real principles of the Democratic Party above slavery to the rotten framework of a political machine.

Acting together in this election, we shall tear down that rotten framework and cast out those who created it.

And, my fellow Americans, we shall reclaim and rebuild the Democratic Party. And when this election is over, we shall give the people of this nation a two-party system that means something!

The States Rights Democrats stand on the faith that the great Democratic Party can and will be restored to the type of leadership that gave us Jackson and Cleveland and Wilson. To that end, we invite the support of Americans everywhere, whatever they may have called themselves in the past.

And by rolling up an overwhelming vote in this election, we shall demonstrate that the great Southland is no longer a political football to be kicked around during the game and ignored after the whistle blows. Our votes shall tell the leaders of both major parties that the South is entitled to a respectful hearing in the political councils of the nation.

It is true that we have a good chance of preventing either candidate from winning an electoral majority, and of thus taking the election to the House of Representatives. If we can do this, the smaller states will have an opportunity to elect a President who will respect their rights.

But our purpose is not to seek power in the government. If it were so, I would never have accepted the call to bear the standards of the States' Rights Democrats. Power is not our aim.

Our purpose is to restore the Democratic Party to its historic function, which is to stand as a bulwark for states rights and for local self-government. We have never had any other.

Those who are with us are men of strength and purpose. We will not give up the fight after this election is over. We shall remain a powerful voice so long as it is necessary to accomplish our aims. Through that voice, those who want the Democratic Party renewed and purified may find their expression.

My friends, we cannot hope to gain for Germany the rights of local self-government, if we deny those rights to our own people. We cannot hope to lead the world out of the sorry mess it is in, if we in America are not united in the faith that the way of government by the people is the best way. We cannot endorse the actions of the present leadership of the national Democrats and the Republicans in sponsoring a program which would change our way of governing ourselves.

Our great bi-partisan system in international affairs is our only means of presenting a united front against the enemies of democracy. We must keep that united front safe against the cheap maneuvers of the politicians.

But we must also set our own house in order by repudiating the efforts of those who would have us exchange our state sovereignty for state slavery.

And we must show the world that the only hope for mankind in this hour of crisis is government by the consent of the governed.

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